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HOME,
AND OTHER POEMS
—
ANGUS ROSS.

“HOME,” AND OTHER POEMS.

“HOME,” AND OTHER POEMS.

BY
A N G U S R O S S,
GOVANHILL, GLASGOW.



RUTHERGLEN:
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P R E F A C E.

FELLOW-WORKMEN AND FRIENDS,—

N venturing to lay before you, in the form of a little book, some of the thoughts that pass through my mind while my hands are busy in the world, or in those happier moments, when I am permitted by a kind Providence to lay down the instruments of toil, and leave the turmoil of revolving machinery for the quiet home or the rural walk, I do so in the hope that you will look on the humble efforts of my muse in a friendly way.

I have carefully avoided inserting anything that would give offence. My subjects have been principally taken from Nature—a field that has often been reaped by abler reapers; yet I have tried to avoid piracy on the thoughts of others, although I have at times detected Memory usurping the place of Fancy; but where this has occurred, I have rejected or acknowledged the quotation.

I have endeavoured to avoid any high flights of fancy, believing that there is but a step between the sublime and the ridiculous, and that often, while the former is desired, the latter is only attained. Therefore, I have used the plainest language to convey my

thoughts, and if they should cast a ray of joy or gladness along the dreary highways and byways of life, I shall feel that I have not mused in vain.

It has been said that this is truly a poetic age, and that "no previous period of the world's history has produced so large a company of really gifted singers." While such may be the case, I fear that my efforts will not add much to the literature of the age, or commend themselves to the critical, however much this might be desired.

Far be it from me to desire empty flattery; yet I feel that he who does not wish to stand deservedly high in the estimation of his fellow-men wants one of the greatest incentives to real worth.

In conclusion, I desire to express my sincere gratitude to Wm. Lorimer, Esq., of the Glasgow Locomotive Works for his kind consideration, valuable advice, and assistance, to whom I dedicate this little book, and subscribe myself your humble servant,

ANGUS ROSS.



“HOME,” AND OTHER POEMS.

H O M E.

WHEN man is wearied of the broil
Attendant on his daily toil,
Where can he find his sweetest rest,
Or where regain his strength the best ?
 Come, tell me, sages, if you can,
The best retreat for toil-worn man.
Is it among the giddy throng,
Or listening to the drunkard's song ?
Or is it 'neath the playhouse glare,
That oft to youth has proved a snare ?
These haunts for ease he seeks in vain,
Nor will he there his strength regain.
Just listen, while I try to show
That such experience leads to woe.
 The day of weary toil is past,
And tolls the evening bell at last ;
In groups the workmen take their way,
Discussing topics of the day ;
Some one suggests a glass of beer,
And each imagines it will cheer
His languid spirits, and renew
His fagged strength of body too.
 The party, be they three or four,
Resolve to sit but half-an-hour ;—

“We'll have a round and take a smoke,
 And leave for home at six o'clock.”
 But man's resolves are weak indeed,
 And this I'll prove, and that with speed ;
 For six o'clock has come and gone,
 And now another hour has flown.
 Yet still they sit, talk, quarrel, brawl,
 “Come, pull that rope upon the wall ;
 Another round and then we'll go.”
 Yet, fate will not allow it so,
 For now there's raised a knotty link,
 And how to settle it they think.

One says the piper went to Fife ;
 Another holds, in wordy strife,
 That the fair maiden that way went ;
 To prove it true his mind is bent.
 Each firmly thinks his notion good ;
 The words they use are very rude.
 The lie is given and returned,
 And angry words with wrath are burned.
 They threaten blows in their devotion,
 When some one moves a lucky motion.
 The chairman rules that both are wrong,
 And for amends suggests a song.
 To this they all at once agree ;
 “The night we'll spend in mirth and glee ;
 Now fill your glasses for a toast,
 And pledge it to our worthy host,”
 (Who takes their money for his trash,
 And serves them well while they have cash ;
 But if their coffers should get low,
 Says, with a bow, “Sirs, you must go.”)
 'Mid toast and song the night flies by,
 The more they drink they feel more dry ;
 As parched ground drinks in the rain,
 So swallow they the juice of grain.
 Their boist'rous glee and laughter loud

Have left their brows without a cloud ;
And as they sing of Scotland’s worth,
And praise the land that gave them birth,
Her heroes bold and maidens fair,
You deem them born without a care.

But let us look the scenes behind,
And see if sorrow’s cause we find ;
See, there sits one as blythe as day,
And joyous as the month of May ;
Who left his sickly wife abed,
With but a stranger at her side ;
No wonder as she weary lies,
She on her Saviour humbly cries :—
“ My longing spirit bring to rest
Within Thy loving tender breast.”
The pray’r is heard, and forth is sent
A message for the breath but lent.

See him who sits in yonder chair,
And on his face no sign of care ;
Last night through dreary hours he kept
His weary watch, and whiles he wept
Beside his darling infant’s cot—
Though now he seems a drunken sot.

O deem them not of flinty heart,
For oft of grief they’ve felt the smart ;
And He who reads the inward sorrow
Will find it in their breasts to-morrow.

But now the night is getting late,
So not another drop they’ll get ;
Forbes M’Kenzie’s shut the door,
Yet still they crave a little more ;
Just half-a-mutchkin in a bottle,
For this they wage a stubborn battle ;
Where they will lodge ’tis hard to tell—
Perhaps within a prison cell.

Tell me if that sweet rest is found,
'Mid those who tread the mazes round ;

Yon haggard youth the truth could tell,
 If loving hand could break the spell
 That leads him at the midnight hour
 To whirl along the ball-room floor.

I asked a maiden pale and wan,
 Whose days had nearly run their span,
 What brought the paleness to her cheek,
 And laid her there so mild and meek.
 She told, when heated in the dance,
 How at the clock her eyes did glance—
 And found the hour had almost come
 At which she promised to be home ;
 So, lightly clad and thinly shod,
 Through wind and rain she swiftly trod,
 To find the door securely lock'd.
 She for admittance gently knock'd.
 While waiting in the cold night rain,
 A chill her frame had quickly ta'en,
 Which settled in a vital part,
 And gnaw'd the life-strings of her heart ;
 She fain would now lie down and rest
 Upon her loving Saviour's breast.

Can wearied flesh find sweet repose,
 Or to the cheek return the rose,
 Within the playhouse or saloon ?
 Where night is turn'd by art to noon ?
 No ! Not among the noisome air,
 That's blanch'd the cheek of many a fair ;
 Where dross is prized as genuine gold,
 And virtue often bought and sold.
 Avoid becoming fashion's slave,
 And shun such places as the grave.

O tell me if there be a spot
 For man when wearied of his lot,
 To which he may in peace retire,
 And fan afresh the smould'ring fire ?
 Ah, there's a spot much to be prized,

Though oft in Folly's eyes despised.

The sailor boy far on the foam,
With mental eye beholds his home :—
In daily thought and nightly dream
Sweet visions through his bosom gleam.
A straw-thatched cottage by the sea,
Well sheltered by an old oak tree,
And at the porch an aged form
Is often seen amid the storm.
Her wistful gaze across the deep,
She casts, while other eyelids sleep—
There's not a blast that stirs the air,
But fills her breast with anxious care—
And often at the midnight hour
Her soul in prayer will outpour,
To Him who rules the wind and wave,
And has the power to smite or save.

The soldier on the battle field,
Prepared, if need, his life to yield,
Beholds engraved on memory's page
His loving parent bent with age—
As slowly he winds o'er the green
That lies his work and home between—
With wearied step and downcast head,
His every limb for rest doth plead.
But soon o'er furrow'd cheek and brow
Shines forth a calm and peaceful glow—
For every corner's neat and clean,
And shining with a homely sheen.
His bonnet's hung upon the nail,
His coat spread o'er the staircase rail ;
While stockings clean and neatly darn'd
Lie on the fender nicely warm'd,
And soon in worsted gray incased
His feet are on the footstool placed.
And now the frugal supper's dish'd,
And every sound is quietly hush'd ;

While from the Giver of all good
 A blessing's asked upon their food.
 They need no dainties to invite,
 Or sharpen up their appetite ;
 The homely fare is soon discuss'd,
 Yet something by the sire is miss'd ;
 And fumbling in his waistcoat pocket,
 He's quite forgot that he has broke it.
 O grudge him not his humble pipe,
 All ye who from your lips do wipe
 The ruby wine from groves of Spain,
 Or spicy fruits from cross the main ;
 For while he sees the curling smoke,
 And hears the ticking of the clock,
 He for a while forgets his care,
 And in his family's joys does share.

Each prattler now his tale must tell
 Of what that day to him befell.
 Poor Tommy lost his pretty ball—
 And Johnny got a dreadful fall—
 The stool that tripp'd him got abuse—
 And pussy caught another mouse.

But now for youth 'tis getting late,
 And Johnny claims his usual seat ;
 Now perch'd on Daddy's knee in glory,
 He claims from him a “ little 'tory ; ”
 But soon his wearied eyelids close,
 Although he often rubs his nose,
 And tries with all his art and skill
 His drowsy enemy to kill.
 Yet Nature must and shall prevail
 O'er living mortals weak and frail,
 So Johnny's quietly led abed,
 With blessings on his curly head.

The mother who has busy been
 Arranging all things neat and clean,
 Now takes her stocking or her seam,

And sits her down—a comely dame.
"Tis thus the few short hours they pass,
True solace to the world's harass ;
But time thus spent will swiftly fly,
And now the hour is drawing nigh
When in the arms of gentle sleep
Their cares they in oblivion steep.

But yet before they do retire,
They humbly thank their heavenly Sire
For all the mercies of the day,
And for His bounties meekly pray.
They ask not wealth, they ask not power,
But grace to keep them every hour
From all the ills that here attend
Their steps, and guide them to the end.

With rev'rence due they read the Word
That tells them of a risen Lord—
And of His low and humble birth,
His spotless life and heavenly worth—
And of his wanderings here below,
A man of sorrow, grief, and woe,
Who, when revil'd, revil'd not,
But meekly bore the sinner's lot.
Though sinless as the angel band
That dwell within His Fatherland,
Yet for our sins he felt the rod—
The wrath of an avenging God,—
That we from death might be set free
"He bled and died upon the tree."

'Mid scenes like these frail man is blest,
And wearied flesh finds sweetest rest.
No wonder then that poets sing,
And make Home's praises loud to ring—
That patriots fight, and bleed, and die,
And captives for thee breathe a sigh ;
However humble be its dome,
There's not a place like "Home, sweet home."

A REVERIE.

YEARIED and worn along life's dreary road,
 I plod my toilsome course sad and forlorn,
 I often bow beneath the heavy load
 Of apathy, of cold neglect, and scorn;
 Or keenly feel the withering, scorching breath
 Of censure, that has griev'd my soul to death.

“Why grieve thy soul to death o'er censure rude?
 Cease thou to give offence to ears polite;
 Then thou in peace of mind and comfort would
 Enjoy the bliss to which thy friends invite.”
 So urges Reason to my frailer life—
 “Forego the pen and cease the wordy strife.”

Yet though I feel that this is wisdom's voice,
 Fancy—a wayward child—will still rebel,
 And hurry on through hidden paths of vice,
 Until within is form'd a conscious hell.
 Avaunt ! fell foe, why thus to death me crush ?
 I dare thy worst, and to the combat rush.

Arouse thee, Fancy, to a brighter lay,
 And chase this gloomy darkness from thy path !
 Soar with the lark and greet the face of day,
 And let not censure kindle up thy wrath !
 Refresh thy senses with the summer air,
 And triumph in thy strength o'er earthly care !

Sound forth thine artless notes, and, like the birds,
 Regardless be of censure or applause !
 Dress up thy humble thoughts in simple words,

And bid defiance to the critic’s laws !
’Tis this, and this alone, will end thy woe,
And peace and joy will like a river flow !

So to the muse I lend my willing mind,
And launch my bark upon the rolling tide,
Fearless of billows lash’d by roaring wind,
And through the various mazes safely glide ;
Yet though exultingly I thus arise,
Alas ! how soon my fleeting fervour dies.

Then must I strive to steer a middle course,
And not to heights or depths ascend or stoop ;
Let reason guide my fancy in discourse,
And not allow my pinions soar or droop ;
Still let my mind in peaceful fancy rove,
And learn from nature in the choral grove.

Thus from the myriad warblers may I cull
Wisdom and worth, though not of high renown ;
And though my humble efforts may not thrill
A critic’s heart, yet they may soothe my own,
And cheer me up amid the ills of life—
An antidote for earthly care and strife.

The chirping sparrow on the humble thatch
May feel a joy as pure, as peaceful too,
As what the tow’ring, soaring lark may catch,
Whose ringing notes sound ’mid the azure blue.
May I with them for ever strive to give
Due praise to Him “ in whom we move and live ! ”

,

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN JOCK & TAM.

I.

JHE other night my friend and I
 Just took a step the country by,
 To get a breath of purer air,
 And on the quiet some notes compare.
 We left the city's noise and strife—
 The Babel of commercial life—
 For shady groves and meadows green,
 Where works of beauty may be seen,
 And lessons learn'd from Nature's book—
 The field, the river, and the brook.
 We wandered on by new-turned soil,
 And watch'd the progress of the toil—
 The husbandman, with team and plough,
 Upon the fruitful field bestow;
 Or watch'd as broad the seed was spread,
 And saw by faith the promised bread.
 The rural toil we both admired—
 An occupation oft desired ;
 So, wandering on as fancy led,
 At last Tam stood, and thus he said :—

TAM.

Is it not grand that now and then
 We can escape the haunts of men ?
 A country life is my delight,
 I would enjoy it with my might.
 What in the city can compare
 With that expanse of beauty there ?
 See Nature's face wears a sweet smile,

From care and sorrow to beguile,
And to the wearied gives relief,
Or strength to bear their load of grief.

JOCK.

Yes, Tam, a country life is grand
To him who owns a lot of land ;
But, man, the world is ill divided,
We cannot get a plot to guide it ;
Three-fourths of Scotland, I am told,
A dozen dukes or lordlings hold,
To whom we all must beck and bow—
A pretty state of matters trow !
They're flesh and blood as well as we,
For we've all sprung from the same tree.

TAM.

Jock, have you been to Parnell's school,
That now you're going to play the fool ?
And think a tenant you might be,
Yet pay for land but Griffiths' fee ?
Drive forth such nonsense from your brain,
For aye poor men we must remain ;
The poet's lot is yours and mine,
Though e'en at *that* we cannot shine ;
But let our blink be blithe my man,
And humbly do just what we can.

JOCK.

To Parnell's school I don't belong,
They sometimes put it rather strong,
Nor would I join with the Land League,
Or 'gainst the Government intrigue ;
The earth to all by God was given,
The few usurp the gift of Heaven.
Where got they then the rights they claim,
To lord it o'er us—more's the shame ?

They drove our fathers from our shores,
Or pack'd them up in city stores.

TAM.

'Tis true from every hill and glen
They've banished stalwart Highlandmen ;
And though we may grieve at the sight,
Now, as of old, is might not right ?
The land is theirs, both far and near,
So they can choose 'tween man and deer ;
And if for sport they choose the latter,
We have no say in the whole matter ;
Then let us take things as they come—
Man, never look so sour and glum.

JOCK.

Well, your philosophy is best,
It keeps in peace an aching breast ;
Still it is hard, you must allow,
Thus under want and toil to bow,
While those that nothing have to do,
Do it with a vengeance too ;
And yet they take the largest share
Of this world's wealth, and scarce will spare
To you and I whereon to live,
And even that they grudge to give.

But history must itself repeat,
And now with signs the air's replete ;
From Erin's Isle there comes a wail,
And Scotland e'en takes up the tale,
That things remodelled soon must be,
Or men in arms we're sure to see.
Alas ! that deeds of daring wrong
Should need a medicine so strong ;
For Julius once for justice died—
The Czar all else but death defied.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN JOCK & TAM.

II.

HE toilsome week had reached an end,
I grasped my stick—a trusty friend—
And countryward I held my way,
Resolved to hold half holiday
Among the fields or by the river,
For Nature finds in me a lover.
The sun of April shone—her showers
Had freshened up both grass and flowers,
And tender buds upon the trees
Were sprouting in the balmy breeze.

The city's smoke I left behind,
I knew where I my friend should find—
'Twas not among the football crowd,
Who fill'd the air with discord loud,
But at the old romantic bridge,
And leaning o'er its time-stain'd ridge
Will he be found, with eager eye,
Watching the shadows as they fly,
Or gazing on them as they dart
Along the waters of the Cart.

By Hampden Park I held my way,
And bravely climbed the Clinkard's Brae;
Mount Florida is quickly passed—
I breathe the country air at last.
Rare beauty bursts upon my sight
Upon the left and on the right,
While straight before, encased in green,

The village of Cathcart is seen,
Whose landmarks Time's removing fast,
Soon to be numbered with the past.

I found Jock in a pensive mood,
On which I dared not to intrude,
So simply giving him good-day,
We slowly held our winding way.
We passed the village of Braehead,
And reached the city of the dead ;
And down we sat to ease our feet
Where rich and poor at last must meet.
Jock read my thoughts about the dead,
For in a whisper thus he said :—

JOCK.

So this must be the end of all,
When death will make the final call,
The rich, the poor, the high, the low,
To the dark tomb at last must go ;
With no respect for state or station
Death claims to all the same relation,
Nor sex nor age can him defy,
The common lot for man's to die—
No matter his degree or birth,
His last estate's six feet of earth.

Then why this worry and unrest ?
This anxious throbbing of the breast ?
The keen pursuit of earthly good ?
When all we need is daily food ;
For naked from the dust we came,
And thither we'll return the same ;
What signifies all pomp and power—
The occupation of an hour—
Since life so soon must have an end
With prince and peasant, foe and friend.

TAM.

Cheer up, friend! why this pensive mood—
This great contempt for creature good ?
Blythe Nature has put on her smiles
To compensate us 'mid our toils,
And dull the heart that finds no cheer
In this the springtime of the year.
Around us and above are spread
Offsprings of Nature from the dead,
And though the grave may claim its prey,
There's yet a Resurrection-Day.

JOCK.

Yes, Tam, that day will be the test
Of all our actions howe'er dress'd ;
The Judge, with an unerring eye,
Will not a single fault pass by.
We may while here by pious cant
Induce our neighbours us to grant
Some credit for a holy life,
While in our hearts dark deeds are rife;
But He who knows the inner man
Can all our motives clearly scan.

The Master, when on earth one day,
To Scribes and Pharisees did say,
“ Your fathers did the prophets kill,
And now you lavish wealth and skill
To grace the spot where they—the just—
Lie soundly sleeping in the dust ;
And yet you go about to slay
The greatest Prophet of the day ;—
Ye hypocrites ! the seed you sow,
Will bring to you but grief and woe.”

TAM.

You surely do not underrate
The growing tendency of late,

Of paying tribute to the dead,
 By piling marble on their head ?
 Why, man, it shows the human heart
 Can sometimes prompt a worthy part.
 Sons for their fathers make amends,
 And of the dead would fain make friends.
 See hundreds plying all their skill,
 To raise a pile for Tannahill.

JOCK.

The fashion is to laud the dead,
 Yet rob the living of their bread ;—
 Of this we have a sample true,
 That might convince e'en sceptic you :—
 At Moorhouse farm, where Pollock sung,
 Eviction's knell has lately rung ;
 The race that for two hundred years
 Has sown and reaped 'mid hopes and fears
 Must even in this year of grace
 Seek for another resting place.

Ah, me ! that such should be the case,
 With scions of a noble race.
 One for his faith his life laid down,
 And now he wears the martyr's crown ;
 And one a wandering exile went—
 A third to banishment was sent—
 All for the freedom we enjoy,
 Which tyranny sought to destroy ;—
 A fourth composed those rhymes sublime,
 Which climax'd in the “Course of Time.”

TAM.

Why, Jock, you're far gone with the fever
 That now seems raging worse than ever ;
 I pity Gladstone, honest man,
 Who, to be just, tries all he can ;

Things would be better than they are,
If he could stop the wordy war
That's wag'd just now the time to kill
That might have passed a good Land Bill.
But all things earthly have an end—
When at their worst they're sure to mend.



A SEASIDE REVERIE.

THE sun is sinking in the west
Behind the lofty mountain's crest,
Yet still his last, his parting ray
Reflects upon the placid bay ;
Like burnished gold, in silver set,
The sea appears, where earth is met ;
And farther back, in darker shade,
The shadows of the eve pervade.
All Nature seems in sweet repose
As e'en is drawing to a close,
The lofty hills are wrapt in night,
And faintly seen by fading light.
And 'mid the dim pervading shade,
To memories back my thoughts do wade,
While Fancy peoples yonder glen
With companies of arm'd men.
M'Gregor's sworn, in dudgeon high,
By all the powers of the sky,
To write his name by fire and sword,
In spite of galleys and of lord.
“They'd rob me of my ancient name,
With all its glory and its fame ;
But while the eagle soars on high
They still will hear my warlike cry ;
Then give our signal to the breeze,
Gleam forth our torches' lurid blaze.”
Their pent-up breath, so long held still,
Now sounds along the heath-clad hill—
Their glittering swords gleam in the light
Of pitch pine torches, stern and bright—

And rushing on in wild array
Soon mingle in a bloody fray.
The bloody work is quickly done,
And now with torch they swiftly run,
The straw-thatch'd huts are soon afame,
That lighten up the hill and plain.
Their booty they collect in haste,
Then turn their footsteps to the east.
But these, the scenes of other days,
Are gone with all their vicious ways,
And men in peace and comfort live,
And to each other welcome give.
The hordes that now invade these shores
Are come to drink of Nature's stores ;
Not from the fastness 'mong the hills—
Not from the mountain's gushing rills—
But from the city's noise and strife
They come to get invigored life.
They come from warehouse and from mill—
They come from counter and from till—
From flaming forge's ceaseless roar
They come to bask upon the shore—
They come from busy marts of trade—
They come to cool an aching head—
From dingy office, dim and dark,
Where of pure air there's not a spark—
From engine-works 'mid 'din and clatter,
Where mind exerts its power o'er matter.
For don't we oft admire the skill
That bends dead matter to the will.
An engine, arm'd with fuel and water,
Deems human strength of little matter.
Yes, strength a thousand arms can't equal,
For weal or woe, whiche'er the sequel.
Just for a moment take a glance,
And this you will admit at once.
See! yonder goes with lightning speed,

Not Arab—but the iron steed—
With all his might along the plain,
Eager as if the goal to gain.
His load is borne along with ease,
Or fast or slow, whiche'er you please,
If guided by a steady hand,
With patience he will quietly stand,
Yet driven with a careless rein
On an incline or level plain,
He's very apt to bound away,
And should he from the railway stray,
His power for mischief you will find
In carnage that would shame the fiend ;—
The rolling stock, though made of steel,
His dreadful strength is made to feel ;—
Thick iron bars are snapped asunder
(His power makes all beholders wonder),
While mangled bodies of the dead—
Some without arms, some without head—
Are strewed about in wild confusion.
This is no idle, vain delusion.
Yet, stay, I will not probe the wound,
Caused by the "Flying Scotchman's" bound.
But such catastrophes are rare ;
For if he's treated with due care,
He'll jog along with steady swing ;
Of commerce he's the moving spring.
With ease and speed he snorts along,
His ponderous limbs are swift and strong ;
If you his simple wants supply,
In speed he will the wind defy.
With quick despatch from town to town
In comfort he will put you down ;
For in this money-making age,
Are swift returns not just the rage ?
And time is money man well knows,
So he's in haste where'er he goes.

No lagging on the way for men
Who eager run the race for gain ;
For them, since “time is on the wing,”
The iron horse is just the thing.
This steam on land has wonders wrought,
And point to point has nearer brought ;
And still, no less upon the sea,
A docile, useful servant he—
Bridging the seas and oceans o'er—
Uniting home and foreign shore.
Not as of old, on wind and tide,
Depends the mariner to glide
His bark o'er ocean's rolling wave,
That often proved his watery grave.
With speed and comfort now may we
Brave all the dangers of the sea,
The proud Atlantic's tow'ring waves
The Cunard Liner safely braves,—
For, strange to tell, though not in boast,
That firm has ne'er a steamer lost
Of all that to Columbia's shore
Their teeming freights of mortals bore.
I need not praise the care and skill
That the whole world with wonder fill,
But here's a proof, if one we need,
That safety may be joined with speed.
And now the sons of skilful toil
Have from their labour ceased a while,
And to enjoy their holidays—
When July's sun aloft doth blaze,
To the sea-side are quickly borne—
To Cowal's shore or land of Lorne—
There to inhale the mountain air,
Or drown in ocean deep their care.
From early morn to late at night
They rove in freedom and delight,
Where Nature pours her healing balm,

And lulls their passions to a calm.
The scenes around are fresh and fair,
And earth and sea seem happy pair,
United in a fond embrace,
Without one care them to distress.
The rippling waves the pebbles kiss,
In purest joy each other bless.
The placid sea in gentle swells,
Like maiden's breast, the secret tells.
Amid these scenes of earth so fair
Men for a time forget their care,
And gathering strength to bear life's load,
Are cheer'd along the dreary road;
And while they wonder and adore,
They'll trust their Maker more and more,
For sparrows do His bounty share,
But man is His peculiar care.



GOD IS GOOD.

HARTHLY scenes, so lovely fair—
Antidotes for worldly care—
Oases in the desert rude—
Still proclaiming “God is good.”

Nature’s voices, soft and low,
Harmonising as they flow
Through the soul, from grove and wood,
Still proclaiming “God is good.”

Sun and moon, and stars on high—
Silent minstrels of the sky—
Singing in their solitude,
Still proclaiming “God is good.”

All the seasons of the year
Bring us more of hope than fear ;
First the bud and then the food,
Still proclaiming, “God is good.”



TO MY FRIEND GEO. MURIE, BELLSHILL.


 Y much-loved and respected friend,
 I've often wished a note to send ;
 I fain would shape it like a wish,
 If I could get about the bush.
 Well, to begin ; I wish no ill
 To you, or any in Bellshill ;
 And may the seasons of the year
 Bring to you all the usual cheer—
 Spring bring her flowers to please the eye,
 And Summer more and more supply ;
 May Autumn bring her golden grain
 To load your stores for Winter's reign.
 This is my general wish, 'tis true ;
 But something more I'd wish for you.
 May happiness your days attend,
 And every day fresh blessings lend ;
 Each fleeting moment may you feel
 A cheerful radiance round you steal ;
 While battling with the ills of life,
 May conscience aye be free from strife ;
 Your home a garden of repose,
 Where sweet affection rippling flows ;
 Blessèd in children and in wife,
 And free from all domestic strife ;
 And may your mind on fancy's wing
 Oft hie abroad, and homeward bring,
 From Nature's beauties—wood and grove—
 The poet's wealth, his treasure-trove ;—

In friendship may you aye be blessed
With those who ne'er betray a trust.
This is the wish of one who knows
That every bush won't bear a rose ;
And knows how oft the spirit grieves
In search of fruit, to find but leaves.



A SUMMER'S REVERIE.

DID Summer's scenes the mind's perplexed,
Nor can its joys well tell ;
While Nature smiles on every side,
Fond lips in silence dwell.

Where'er my eye may chance to roam,
O'er earth, o'er sea, or sky,
Fresh beauties meet my wondering gaze,
Yet, Oh ! for speech I sigh.

Could I but utter all I feel,
While gazing far and wide ;
On earth or sky divinely fair,
Or on the rolling tide,

All bathed beneath the blaze of day,
All sparkling with delight.
But how to paint the various scenes,
Exceeds my utmost might.

Parnassus' heights I fain would climb,
And learn the art to tell ;
But in the vale I'm forced to stay,
And with the worm to dwell.

Yet, though a worm, I'll them admire,
And feel with rapturous pride,
My Heavenly Father made them all—
The air, the earth, the tide.

The tide that rolls from pole to pole,
And visits every shore ;
Yea, all that moves within the same,
Was made by Him of yore.

Earth, with its varied flowers and plants—
The grass that clothes the land—
The tow’ring rocks and mountains high,
Were made by the same Hand.

The Hand that made the orb of day,
And set the moon on high—
E’en that same Hand, though great in might,
Has made the humble fly.

All Nature from one Fountain-Head,
Obeyed the same command ;
The Power that fixed the stars on high,
Has formed each grain of sand.

The king upon his lofty throne—
The beggar in the mire—
The rich, the poor, the high, the low,
Must own a common Sire.

Then why should man on brother man,
In bold disdain look down,
Since the same Power that made the mire,
Bestows the golden crown.



AUTUMN.

NO more is heard the voice of Spring,
 In lively notes in wood or grove ;
 No more the lark upon the wing
 I hear, in sweetest strains of love.

I cannot see the verdure now
 Of Summer in her sheeny gown ;
 For Autumn's sun has turned the brow
 Of Nature into darkest brown.

Yet Nature's face, though sere and aged,
 And turned to brown from lovely green,
 Like to a life spent well-engaged,
 Beams with a smile calm and serene.

The peace that flows from virtuous deeds,
 Is thine to cheer thee in decay ;
 Though in thy face the thought full reads,
 That Time has marked thee for his prey.

Sweet is the memory of the just,
 Who need no monumental pile
 To mark the spot where, in the dust,
 They find a rest from all their toil.

So memory still will fondly brood,
 And draw upon the much-loved past,
 Till Winter pass and Boreas rude,
 And Spring again sweet joys recast.

E V E N I N G.

HOW still and peaceful is the scene
In this sweet evening hour !
The jaded worker's left his toil,
The bee has left the flower.

All Nature's voices are asleep,
Saving the gentle breeze,
Hymning its music soft and low,
Among the leafy trees.

How soothing is this solemn hour,
When Nature's gone to rest !
I feel its cheering influence here,
Calming my troubled breast.

The stars from out the deep blue vault
Are gazing with their might,
And marshalled are in bright array,
As sentinels of Night.

The full-orbed moon in splendour deck'd,
Pursues her path above ;
Yes, all on high, and all below,
Proclaim that God is love.

THE DREAMS OF YOUTH.

THE dreams, the dreams, the happy dreams
 Of youth are swiftly gone;—
 Like foam upon the running streams,
 They're quickly borne along.
 Dame Fancy weaves her fairy tales,
 And paints the scenes so fair;
 Youth fain would view them, but he fails—
 They vanish in the air.

The dreams, the dreams, the happy dreams
 Of youth, how swift they fly;—
 They're like the transitory beams
 From out a cloudy sky.
 The gaudy hues of worldly joys
 Enchant the youthful mind;
 It strives to grasp the glittering toys,
 Tho' fickle as the wind.

The dreams, the dreams, the happy dreams
 Of youth, how soon they die;—
 They're like the fiery lightning gleams
 That flit across the sky.
 Tho' eager on forbidden fruit
 Vain youth would love to feast,
 He soon will reach the hurtful root
 That's bitter to the taste.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN JOCK & TAM.

III.

Jock.

TWO friends the other day did meet,
And kindly did each other greet.
“ How are you, Thomas ? ” John did say ;
“ I thought you dead, or gone away
To some far country 'cross the sea,
Where all, it seems, go now to dee.
The days are gone when Scottish worth
Clings to the land that gave it birth ;
And now the patriot's spirit's fled
That used to hover o'er our dead.”

TAM.

I think you're right. Alas ! the day
That sees so many gaun away
To seek their bread in other climes,
For these are hard and dreadful times.
No work for man—no work for beast—
And he that works not cannot feast.
'Tween broken banks and failures many,
The honest man can't get a penny ;
They've scattered wide our country's gear,
And now to live it's “ all the tear.”

Jock.

Fegs, Tam, ye're richt ! the times are hard,
And we must aye keep watch and ward ;
For now the wolf, though shy before,
growling at our very door.

But, guidsake, where's the siller gane,
 That used to drive the trade amain ?
 It's grown as rare as real friends ;
 I scarce can get what meets my ends ;
 And, fegs, you need not talk o' feasting,
 I'm thankful now if I get tasting.

TAM.

We have not far, my friend, to travel,
 That very mystery to unravel ;
 And hark, my man—just mark me well—
 These empty buildings tales may tell.
 Just look around from where we stand,
 And you will see on every hand
 Row upon row of empty dwellings—
 Some without plastered walls or ceilings ;
 Of doors and windows they are scant,
 Because more cash the banks won't grant.

JOCK.

These empty houses, large and many,
 Sure, must have cost a handsome penny ;
 But yet, I cannot see how they
 Would drive the iron trade away ;
 They are as slack just at this time,
 As those who deal in stone and lime.
 The foundries and the mills are slack,
 And have been so for some time back ;
 And now we search both long and wide
 For ships a-building on the Clyde.

TAM.

'Tis true, my friend, that stone's not iron,
 And brick and lime not cotton yarn :
 But cash is cash where'er you put it,
 And nothing can be done without it ;

So cash sunk there is worse than dead,
 Because it starves our real trade.
 If men had only used their own,
 And let their neighbours' gear alone,
 The City Bank would still be sound,
 Wi' peace and plenty all around.

JOCK.

Tam, you are getting too profound ;
 Your argument I cannot sound ;
 I neither work in iron nor lime,
 And yet I've idle been some time.
 I make men's clothes, and you their shoes,
 And yet our service they refuse.
 I cannot get a suit to make it ;
 I think the folk will soon go nakit.
 And you, I'm sure, would not refuse
 To make a pair of navvy's shoes.

TAM.

'Deed no ! although I've seen the day
 I'd scorn to make at them a pay ;
 But siller's scarce and dull the times,
 Folk will not buy breeks, brogues, or rhymes.
 You cannot see my argument ;
 I have not time to show its bent ;
 But yet the trades are joined together,
 So what wrecks one the rest won't weather.
 But I just now must haste away ;
 We'll end our crack some other day.

WAITING FOR THE VERDICT.

NOW, hush, gudewife, keep all things still,
 While I am driving at the quill ;
 My brain's on fire—now talk quite low,
 Else you will stop the Muse's flow."

"I mean this time to take a place,
 Among the poets of our race ;
 You need not be of me a scorner,
 I mean to win the Poet's Corner !"

She smiled at me, but nothing said,
 But this, I know, ran through her head :—
 "The man's as mad as a March hare,
 We'll need to speak him smooth and fair."

Then to my task I buckled strong—
 I shall not call it poem or song—
 But just a simple, humble rhyme—
 A higher flight some other time.

I wrote of birds, of flowers, of trees,
 Of insect life, of humming bees,
 Of landscapes and of running streams—
 These were the subjects of my dreams.

My brains were quicker than my hands,
 They travelled over many lands ;
 And speedily they did indite
 A great deal more than I could write.

"Well, that will do!" says I at last,
 And at my wife a glance did cast;
 She looked at me, and then she said—
 "It's time that you were in your bed."

"You're wasting gas, pen, ink, and paper,
 And steeping aye your brains the deeper
 In rhyming nonsense and such trash,
 That ne'er will bring you fame or cash."

"O woman, have ye no ambition
 If not, just practise some discretion;
 How know but we may see the day
 That rhyming may be made to pay."

"It's true that Homer was a beggar,
 And Burns a ploughman and a digger;
 But Fortune is a fickle dame,
 And often smiles where there's no claim."

"But never mind, I'll send this on,
 It may be just a penny gone
 To help to pay the nation's debt—
 One comfort that, at anyrate."

That night repose forsook my bed,
 For balmy sleep had from me fled;
 I tossed about from side to side,
 Like to a ship upon the tide.

The weary hours pass'd slowly on.
 There's two o'clock—the night is gone;
 And soon the morning dawn will break,
 And all the sons of toil awake—

Awake from sweet refreshing sleep,
 While I a night-long vigil keep,

Harassed by thoughts I scarce can bear,
On how my humble lines will fare.

At last exhausted nature fails,
And into dreamland Fancy sails ;
But soon my nerves receive a shock,
By being told it's six o'clock.

Wearied and unrefreshed I rise,
Proceed to where my labour lies.
I move all day as in a dream,
A very bubble on the stream

Of time, that slowly moves along,
When anxious thoughts within us throng,
Each fifteen minutes seems an hour,
And that one week as long as four.

At last the fatal day has come,
To make me or to sign my doom ;
Alas ! my piece has been rejected,
And I sit down, sad and dejected.

Poor comfort this for all my toil,
Within my passions hotly boil ;
And yet I cannot cease to rhyme,
Though more ridiculous than sublime.



A CONVERSATION BETWEEN TAM & JOCK.

IV.

TAM.

"HO'S that a-chappin' at the door,
I've heard that rap, I'm sure, before.
Now, up ! gudewife, and let him in,
'Tis Jock, my frien, or I'm mista'en."

And Jock it is, as sure's a gun—
The weans will get some roarin' fun ;
For Jock can tell a funny story,
In which the young folks always glory.
"How are ye, frien'? bring in a chair,
And let us of ye'r welfare hear."

JOCK.

In body weel—guidness be thankit,
But o'er my soul hangs a wet blanket ;
For peace o' mind I have not got
Since I that read what Murdoch wrote
About us as vain imitators,
Who try to ape and beat their betters.
Surely the man is scant o' matter
When he descends 'bout us to clatter.
He might have sounded Jamie Worth,
And left alone the frailer earth.

TAM.

Hoots ! hoots ! cheer up, man ! what's the odds?
We cannot all be rhyming gods ;

And tho' he from his lofty tree
 May look in scorn on you and me,
 We must not pine, or break our hearts,
 But try and bear his fiery darts.
 Our simple notes may touch a chord
 Where his high strains will not accord ;
 Then let us sing, tho' humble we,
 And always blithe and happy be.

JOCK.

There's wisdom in that say o' yours—
 All don't admire the self-same flow'rs ;
 The robin's notes may light a spark
 That can't be kindled by the lark,
 Of hope, in some poor aching breast,
 And bring to it sweet joy and rest ;
 So to repine I feel 'tis wrong,
 Come, I will sing the weans a song :—

DREARY WINTER.

Dreary winter's come again,
 With its cold, frost, snow, and rain ;
 Since the birds have ceased to sing,
 Nought on earth can pleasure bring
 To this weary heart of mine.

Trees are stripp'd, and fields are bare,
 Nature wears a gloomy air;
 Gone they are, on fleeting wing,
 All the beauties of the spring—
 From this weary heart of mine.

Dreary winter haste away,
 Come again the summer's day,

When the birds for me will sing,
And the flowers sweet comfort bring
To this weary heart of mine.

TAM.

Bravo, my friend, *that* is the cause—
Your gloom is brought by Nature’s laws.



TIS NOTHING.

IS nothing—only a small cloud—
Yet see how swift it spreads;
Anon we hear the thunder loud,
Resounding o'er our heads.
And so one little angry word
May cause a world of strife—
Pierce through a heart as with a sword,
And make a foe for life.

'Tis nothing—only a sunbeam,
That sparkles from the sky ;
Yet see ! it dances on the stream,
And gladdens many an eye.
So one word kindly spoken may
A soothing balm impart,
And join to you along life's way,
A true and loving heart.



LIFE IS WHAT WE MAKE IT.

SAGES and poets oft have sung
That “life is but an empty dream ; ”
An airy bubble lightly flung
Upon the ceaseless flowing stream
Of time, whose restless waters ever flow,
Loaded with sorrow through a vale of woe.

The fleeting moments, as they pass,
Are marked by care, by toil, and strife ;
And man, amid the sad harass,
Is always sighing “Such is life ; ”
A dreary pilgrimage, a weary road
By which we hasten, ‘neath a heavy load.”

Loaded by whom ? Pause, mortal, pause,
Ere you would in your folly lay,
The blame upon your Maker’s laws,
And your own ignorance display.
Know that this life has pleasure if you take it—
Is sweet or bitter, as you choose to make it.

If we in wantonness pursue
The fleeting joys that earth supplies ;
We find but sorrow here, ‘tis true,
But there’s a joy that never dies—
Joy that on earth we may both feel and taste,
And after death when mingling with the ble

G L O O M.

 FAIN would sing a joyful song
 To cheer my lonely way;
 Yet gloom hangs heavy at my heart,
 Of light there's not a ray.
 My sun is dark, no cheering beams,
 Can pierce the thick dark cloud
 Of grief, that doth on every side,
 Lap round me like a shroud.

I fain would sing a joyful song
 To cheer my heart full sad;
 Yet still my way is dark and drear,
 No gleams to make me glad.
 The path by which I tread along
 Is rugged all and torn;
 The flower I to my bosom prest
 Has turned into a thorn.



S H A D O W S.

BIRDS are not always singing,
Flowers are not always gay;
Bees are not always bringing
Sweet honey from the May.
The sky oft times in sorrow
Waters the world with tears;
To present joys the morrow
May wake our direst fears.

The sun's not always shining,
Dark clouds will oft appear,
To hide the “silver lining”
Of scenes we love most dear.
And when the sky's beclouded,
We do not see the lark;
So oft the mind, enshrouded,
Goes groping in the dark.



AUTUMN.

AEAVES are falling, falling fast—
Their short lease of life is past ;
They came with the summer's day,
Autumn sees them go away.

Flowers are dying, dying fast—
To the ground their beauty's cast ;
Summer gave them vital breath,
Autumn brought to them but death.

Nature's fading, fading fast—
Soon her crown of joy is past ;
Leaves and flowers will go to rest
In a loving mother's breast.

Time is flying, flying fast—
Time with me will soon be past ;
May I find a peaceful end
In the bosom of a Friend.



THE ROBIN.



HEAR the Robin's plaintive notes—

I know his voice right well ;
He sings to me of summer gone,
Of coming winter fell.

When leaves were green and flowers were gay,
From busy haunts he strayed ;
He gambol'd in the summer's sun,
Or bask'd in the cool shade.

His song was in the wild wood heard,
Far from the “haunts of men,”
Or by the smoothly running brook
In some sequester'd glen.

But now since leaves and flowers are gone,
In field, in wood, and glen,
He dreads the coming winter's storm,
And now revisits men.



GOD IS LOVE.



BEAUTY reigns on earth and sea, love,
 All the world is bright and fair,
 Nature's voices soft and low, love,
 Warble through the balmy air.
 Come and let us join the music—
 Though it were but with a sigh—
 That ascends from all around us
 To the portals of the sky.

Vocal are the woods and groves, love,
 E'en the leaves their tribute bring,
 As they flutter in the breeze, love,
 Harping on harmonious string.
 Let our voices join the chorus
 Wafted to the throne above,
 Though imperfect be our praises,
 Meet it is—for God is love.”



CORN *VERSUS* CORNS.



HE farmer loves to view his corn
Upon a lovely summer's morn,
Drinking up the sparkling dew
Beneath a sky of spotless blue.
No other sight to him so fair—
Nor can at all with it compare—
As the green shoots as up they climb,
Unless it's sheaves in harvest time.

I am no farmer bred or born,
And yet I have a growing corn.
To me it brings no sweet delight,
At morning, noon, nor yet at night.
It plagues my body all day long,
I'd sell it for a worthless song,
Or freely give it blade and root—
Because it grows upon my foot.



THE VOICE OF SPRING.



HEAR a sweet and gentle voice
 In mildest accents ring
 O'er hill and plain, through vale and dale—
 It is the voice of Spring.

Her voice o'er nature far and wide
 Will joy and gladness bring,
 The trees will bud, the flowers will bloom,
 Obedient to the Spring.

King Winter to the North must fly,
 And that on fleeting wing,
 Resign the throne usurped so long,
 And give the reins to Spring.

Her gentle sway will soon restore
 The wounds of Winter's sting,
 A smile will beam on Nature's face,
 Of welcome to the Spring.

The thrush will carol in the grove,
 The lark will sweetly sing,
 And all the woods will echo long
 The praises of the Spring.



FANCY, TUNE THY LAY.

P, Fancy, catch a joyous theme,
And chase sad gloom away !
This life is not a dreary dream—
So, Fancy, tune thy lay !

The sun and moon, by day, by night,
In beams of gladness shine ;
The stars above, with all their might,
Their radiant glories twine.

The earth, the sea, the air, the sky,
With joy and gladness ring ;
Then cast aside your gloom, and try
Your sweetest notes to bring !

For why should man, who bears the print
Of Majesty Divine,
Alone be found to bear the brunt
Of grief?—let joy be thine !

Lift up your head, and look abroad,
See Nature bright and gay ;
Now, cast aside your heavy load—
Come, Fancy, tune thy lay !



W E L C O M E.

WELCOME, sunshine, welcome showers—
 Welcome bird notes, welcome flowers ;
 Winter's gone, and spring has come,
 Bringing joy to every home.

The bud upon the thorn appears,
 Quieting all foreboding fears ;
 Feathered minstrels on each spray,
 Piping forth a joyous lay.

Nature long in mourning dress'd,
 Now expands her lovely breast,
 Clothes herself in brightest green—
 Deck'd in beauty like a queen.

See the lark on pinions light,
 Heavenward soaring in his flight ;
 Hark ! his thrilling notes on high
 Pierce the portals of the sky.

Down the valley, from the hill,
 Flows the little warbling rill,
 Skipping on in mirthful glee,
 On its journey to the sea.

And so our life is but a stream—
 May it flow 'mid sunny gleam ;
 May we hasten, pure and free,
 Onward to Eternity.

MY COLLIER LAD.

HE sun out owre the Cathkin hills is blinking
blithe and bonnie;
I'll take my plaid, when all is still, and off to
meet my Johnnie.
My Johnnie is a collier lad, he works baith late and
early;
Yet, though his work be black and grim, he's won my
heart quite fairly.

All week down in the deep dark mine, he toils away
right cheery,
And often longs for Sabbath morn that he may see his
dearie;
While I among the shuttle's clink, from early morn
till night,
With longing eyes look for the day that brings to me
delight.

My mother often says to me that good will never come
Of courting on the Sabbath morn, so bids me stay at
home;
But where's the ill, with one you love, whose heart is
true and kind?
For Johnnie's no like other men that change wi' every
wind.

Last night he press'd me to his breast and whisper'd
in my ear,
That not another maid on earth could be to him so dear;

He asked me then to be his bride, in accents soft and low,
And, though I trembled at the thought, I could not say him "No."

"Tis true, life is a rugged road, and money will be scant,
But the good Lord, who feeds the birds, won't let his creatures want;
So we will put our trust in Him, nor from his laws depart,
And try to serve Him night and day with all our mind and heart.



MEMORIES.



AM sitting in the meadow,
Beneath the old oak tree,
Where oft in youth, a merry band,
We sat and sang with glee.
Where now are all those merry boys
That used to sing with me ?
They're scattered wide, yet fancy can
Each happy visage see.

There we all sat beneath the shade,
And sang our youthful lays ;
Those memories will never fade—
Those happy, happy days !
We sang of love, we sang of war,
Beneath that old oak tree ;
The songs we often sang before
Around our mother's knee.

The mavis, perch'd among the leaves,
In wonder oft looked down,
And gaily piped his sweetest notes,
Our humble lays to crown ;
The gurgling stream that murmur'd by
It's cheerful notes did lend ;
While from the wood the echoes soft,
In harmony did blend.

We sang of ancient heroes brave,
Of bandits fierce sang we ;
Of Robin Hood, of bold Rob Roy,
Beneath that old oak tree.

Fond memories cling around thee, friend,
Memories that ne'er will die,
E'er and anon they gladness bring,
Like sunbeams from the sky.



GLEAMS OF NATURE.

HE pretty little daisy
That grows upon the lea—
The sparkling little dew-drop—
More pleasure brings to me
Than all the pomp of kingship—
The glare and gaudy show—
To which the most of humankind
In admiration bow.

The wild-rose by the way-side—
The modest butter-cup—
Are cheering gleams of nature,
From which I pleasure sip ;
The heart’s-ease ’neath the hedgerow,
Whose head is scarcely seen,
For me has greater beauty
Than the pomp of any queen.



GENTLE MURMURS.

 GENTLE murmurs on the shore ;
 How I love the tiny roar
 Of the wavelets dashing o'er
 Pebbles bright for evermore.

Gentle murmurs on the hill,
 Voices from the passing rill ;
 Through my soul they send a thrill,
 Ever restless, never still.

Gentle murmurs in the wood,
 The abode of solitude ;
 Soft and low, and never rude,
 To my fancy pleasant food.

Gentle murmurs by the stream—
 Aye with me a cheering theme,
 Through my soul it sends a gleam—
 Soothe my nerves like fairy dream.

Gentle murmurs in the air,
 Gentle murmurs everywhere,
 In a world so fresh and fair,
 When the mind is free from care.

THE DYING BOY TO HIS MOTHER.

I'M not afraid to die, mother,
I'm not afraid to die;
I am only going home, mother,
To mansions in the sky.

O, do not weep for me, mother,
O, do not weep for me;
I soon shall be at rest, mother,
Beyond life's stormy sea.

We soon shall meet again, mother,
We soon shall meet again,
"Beyond the reign of death," mother,
Beyond the reach of pain.

We'll meet to part no more, mother,
We'll meet to part no more,
Where billows never roar, mother,
On Canaan's happy shore.



THE HOPE OF THE JUST.

HOW sweetly glides the stream of time,
When hearts are full of love sublime !
By faith our eyes see through the gloom
That hangs between us and our home.

The thorny path, the rugged way,
The pits by night, the snares by day,
We safely pass, and now we go
Rejoicing through this vale of woe.

The cares of life we cast aside,
We look for rest beyond its tide ;
We rest not here, we only roam,
And press toward our heavenly home.

What, though the billows loud may roar,
We soon shall reach yon happy shore,
And dwell for ever with the blest,
In the eternal day of rest.



TO MY FRIEND WILLIAM THOMSON.

YOUR plaintive strains oft touch a chord
That's strung within my breast ;
Like you, I feel the two-edged sword
Of yearning and unrest—

Yearning for what I cannot reach,
For thoughts that soaring fly
So far above the utmost stretch
Of my poetic eye.

My turbulent and unsettled breast
Oft feels keen sorrow's dart ;
In thee I find the same unrest
Which marks a kindred heart.



SUMMER SABBATH MORN.



MAIL, lovely morn ! whose sweet return
 Gives joy to those who only mourn ;
 And calms the anxious troubled breast
 Into a holy heavenly rest.

The world's turmoil is cast aside—
 We rise in thought beyond the tide
 Of all our earthly toil and care,
 And feed our minds on purer fare.

And Nature lies in holy calm,
 Her bosom bath'd in dewy balm ;
 The fleecy clouds that idly fly,
 Pause to admire as they pass by.

Slowly they melt or float away,
 Before the gorgeous orb of day ;
 And now to gild our moral skies,
 Thou sun of Righteousness arise !

Arise, and chase the gloom away !
 Change Nature's night to heavenly day !
 Inspire our hearts with love divine—
 Let every thought, word, act, be Thine !

BE GENTLE WITH THE LITTLE LAMBS.

BE gentle with the little lambs,
Nor chide them by the way ;
Lead them into the narrow path,
Nor let them go astray.

Be gentle with the little lambs,
Watch them with tender care ;
Lead them into the pastures green,
Where all is bright and fair.

Be gentle with the little lambs,
Nor let cross tempers breed ;
Make them to lie in pleasant shades,
Them by still waters lead.

Be gentle with the little lambs,
Leave not God's love untold ;
Protect them from the howling wolf,
And guide them to the fold.

Be gentle with the little lambs,
For fierce temptation's near ;
Teach them life's slippery path to tread,
And how the cross to bear.

Be gentle with the little lambs,
For sorrows are in store
For them upon life's stormy sea
Before they reach the shore.

MY HOLIDAYS.

MY holidays are at an end,
To circumstance I'm forced to bend,
And bid adieu to coast and sea,
And all the scenes so dear to me.

I have enjoy'd a pleasant time,
And fain would I recount in rhyme
The sweet sensations of my stay,
In quarters snug at Gourock Bay.

From my front window can be seen
A view that well might serve a queen—
A wide expanse of sparkling blue,
Dotted with craft of every hue.

While in procession all day long,
Craft after craft each other throng ;
Some come from lands far, far away,
With dainties for the rich and gay.

The busy coursers o'er the deep
Hither and thither constant sweep,
Loaded with pleasure-seekers gay,
For loch, for island, or for bay.

When tempted from my snug abode,
I trudge along the Barrhill Road ;
There Nature's beauty, join'd to art,
Delights the eye and cheers the heart.

From hence I reach the rugged shore,
And listen to the wavelets' roar,
Or gaze with rapture on the swell
Of ocean, at the Tinker's Well.

And if I still hold on my way,
Beneath the bright sun's glittering ray—
Admiring hill and dale and loch—
I reach the ferry of the Cloch.

On either hand, along the shore,
Of beauty there's an endless store :
I know not which to praise the most,
The sylvan groves or rugged coast.

But endless as these beauties are,
I now must leave them for the war
Of city toil, of care, and strife,
Yet must not pine, for—“ such is life.”



THE REVIVAL OF TRADE.

HEER up, my lads ! the ~~worſt~~ is past,
The clouds are breaking up at last,
That hover'd o'er our waning trade,
And made us think it almost dead.

We've oft been told that working-men
Had slain the goose that brought the gain—
That shorter hours and longer pay
Had driven all the trade away.

But such, in fact, is not the case :
For none of all the human race
Can beat us in the art of steam,
For sea, or land, or running stream.

What river, lake, or inland sea,
Can with the Clyde comparëd be ?
Her ships are known on every shore,
Are found where'er the billows roar.

Her locomotives you will find,
Where'er men are in trade combined ;
By Nelson made, with steel for ribs,
Or, better still, those made by Dëbs.

Our horny-handed engineer
Will hold his own, you need not fear,
Against his peers the world o'er
From Belgium to Baltimore.

Of late, our trade's been much annoyed,
And many have been unemployed ;
But now restorëd confidence
Will bring us shillings, pounds, and pence.



THE SEASON OF REST.

HULL wearied and worn by the toils of the day,
And sadly harass'd by the thorns in the way ;
I eagerly wish for the sun in the west,
And hail with delight the sweet season of rest.

The wealthy may wish for the shadows of night,
A season that to them brings folly's delight ;
But the poor by long toil and hardship oppress'd,
Aye hail it with joy as a season of rest.

The profligate longs for its cov'ring to hide
The base deeds that will not the daylight abide ;
While wearied by trouble or toil, the distress'd
Will welcome its covert as bringing sweet rest.

Though the low prowling thief may wish for its
shade,
To hide by its darkness his pillaging raid ;
To me and my compeers it comes as a guest—
And smiling we hail the sweet season of rest.



U N R E S T.

WHAT though you gain the world's applause,
And all its riches share ;
These cannot give you solid peace,
Or free your mind from care.

Altho' in learning you excel,
And wisdom have in store ;
Your mind is ne'er at peace or rest,
But eager asks for more.

Tho' you possess all earthly good,
And bask beneath the smile
Of wealth and health, yet is your life
Beset with weary toil.

The heart of man must ever crave
Some good not yet possessed ;
Nor can the world, with all its joys,
Lull his desires to rest.

The pleasures of this fleeting world
Are but as shadows cast
Across our path, which, when we grasp,
But for a moment last.

LIGHT AND SHADE.



HERE is no rose, however fair,
 But has its prickly thorn ;
 There is no home but has its care—
 Some secret cause to mourn.

Tho' bright the morning beams may shine,
 The mountain-tops right o'er ;
 Yet fleeting clouds are on the wing,
 And thunders soon may roar.

The placid sea, in murmurs sweet,
 May ripple on the shore ;
 Anon, the billows at thy feet,
 In loudest chorus roar.

So joys and griefs each other chase,
 Like clouds the bright sunbeams ;
 And smiles and tears upon the face
 Are just life's transient gleams.

In buoyant youth the heart in joy,
 May every care defy ;
 But soon the pleasures find alloy—
 Earth's sweetest joys must die.

The fairest flowers of earth will fade,
 Before the wintry blast ;
 And o'er youth's brightest joys are laid
 The shades that care has cast.

LOVE IS EVER YOUNG.



THE summer months have flown, love,
The roses droop and die ;
The autumn months are waning, love,
And dreary winter's nigh.
The leaves are sere and dry, love,
The grassy verdure's flown ;
The birds have ceas'd their singing, love,
And Nature's weary grown.

The life we lead is fleeting, love,
It soon will pass away ;
Our spring, our summer, autumn, love,
Soon end in winter's day.
But while our hearts are one, my love,
We heed not shadows flung
By earthly care and sorrow, love,
For love is ever young.



Oh ! What is love ? I asked the sage
Of furrow'd cheek and brow,
Whose hoary locks proclaim'd his age ;—
His feeble step and slow
Was tottering on the verge of death ;—
He upward cast his eye,
While in an anxious feeble breath—
The answer was a sigh.



WHAT IS LIFE?



WHAT is life? 'Tis but a flower,
A rose within a prickly bower,
That fades away within an hour
Before the storm;
'Tis like the cloudlet scudding past,
That only will a moment last,
And scarcely any shadows cast,
How fleet its form!

O what is life? 'Tis but a dream,
A bubble on the passing stream,
A ray of light or transient gleam,
That will not last.

'Tis like the mist upon the hill,
Or foam upon the gushing rill,
That throbs a moment and is still,
Then all is past.

O, what is life? 'Tis but a race,
A movement swift from place to place—
How soon there is not left a trace
Of how it ran.

'Tis like the web the spider builds—
Or waving herbage of the fields—
That soon before the sickle yields—
So brief its span.

O, what is life? 'Tis but a spark—
A meteor shining in the dark
That scarcely leaves behind a mark—

So light its tread ;
"Tis like a tale that has been told,
Or garment that has waxen old,
A leaf that did its fibres fold,
And so is dead.



AN ADVICE

Toil be your lot, think it no disgrace,
But boldly look the whole world in the face ;
It's courage you want, go straight for the goal,
Don't do things by halves, go in for the whole.



O C T O B E R .

HE leaves are falling thick and fast,
Slain by the Autumn's chilly blast ;
The shortening day, the leafy way,
Proclaim the coming wintry day.

See Nature of her beauty shorn—
The waving grass, the nodding corn,
The faded flower, the leafless bower—
Tell of the coming wintry power.

The carols of the early morn
Are hush'd within the leafless thorn ;
The joys are past that could not last
Beneath the surly wintry blast.

All Nature seems bow'd down with care,
And wears a haggard, weary air ;
Her beauteous form has lost its charm
Before the coming wintry storm.



N O V E M B E R.

HE hoar-frost clothes the leafless thorn,
All Nature seems sad and forlorn ;
No echoing voice in wood or grove ;
No piping notes of joy and love.

The sun’s red glare through hazy sky,
Paints the bare fields in crimson dye,
And hastens away his eyes to feast
On brighter scenes in the south-west.

When summer’s flowers were bright and gay,
He loving linger’d the whole day ;
But now since they are dead and gone,
With undue speed he hastens on—

To where beneath a brighter sky
On verdant beauty rests his eye,
And leaves to Luna’s gentle sway
To rule and govern as she may.

Sad look the lonely naked trees ;
No rustling music in the breeze ;
Upon the tall and leafless bough,
E’en noisy crows are silent now.

“ The chill November’s surly blast,”
O’er Nature’s joys doth shadows cast ;
And keen reflection by the way
Proclaims life’s coming wintry day.

THE HARVEST HOME.

EE, the hills are dressed in purple,
 And the trees are turning brown,
 And the wind with eddying circle
 Blows their faded covering down ;
 Wither'd leaves are thickly lying
 On the ground beneath our tread ;
 Those on high are quickly dying—
 Soon to mingle with the dead.

Sad the thought that Nature's grandeur
 Should thus fade and pass away ;
 That her power should sink to langour,
 And her beauty thus decay.
 Yet, methinks I hear glad voices—
 Hark ! upon the breeze they come ;
 Happy reapers—each rejoices
 As he bears his harvest home.

Yes, the golden sheaves are gathered,
 And the " daily bread's " made sure,
 Tho' the leaves are sere and wither'd,
 This is Nature's gladdest hour ;
 Man now finds his faith rewarded,
 Tho' he oft looked through the gloom,
 As he blade and ear regarded ;
 Now he sees his harvest home.

Yes, in answer to the prayer—
“Give each day our daily bread,”
God, the great, the high Purveyor,
Has so multiplied the seed,
That with mourning tears of sadness
Had been buried in the tomb;
Now an hundred fold in gladness
Crowns the happy harvest home.



THE WORLD IS ALL BEFORE YOU.



THE world is all before you,
Tho' rugged oft it seems ;
There are flowers and gems there for you,
There are bright and sunny gleams.
Then pull the flowers around you,
But cast the thorns away,
And let no cares astound you—
Be happy while you may.

The world is all before you,
Tho' gloomy clouds may rise ;
Still let this thought restore you—
There's sunlight in the skies.
Beyond the clouds above you,
There shines a gladsome ray ;
There's one above who loves you—
Be happy while you may.



TRUST 'MIDST GLOOM.

ALL the clouds seem dark above me,
 Loaded with a weight of woe,
Nought on earth can comfort give me,
 Darkness reigns where'er I go.

Be I east, west, north, or southward,
 No matter where I stand ;
Yes, I feel I need a safeguard—
 Father, take me by the hand.

Frail I feel, and weak ; and slowly
 Comes and goes my feeble breath.
Now I feel both mean and lowly—
 Just a creeping worm of earth ;
Press'd with care, weigh'd down with sorrow,
 Earth seems but shifting sand,
Yet the sky will clear to-morrow—
 Father, take me by the hand.



LOVE OF HOME.

 H ! Tell me not of fairer scenes,
 Beneath a cloudless sky ;
 Oh ! urge me not to leave my home—
 Here I will live and die.
 The scenes that you so much admire,
 Are not so dear to me
 As these stern rugged rocks and hills—
 That river, lake, and sea.

Scotland, my home, tho' stern and wild,
 Is dearer far to me
 Than the warm clime and balmy breeze
 Of flow'ry Italy.
 I would not change for orange groves
 The ruddy heather bloom ;
 The myrtle cannot match for me
 The blossom on the broom.

You ask me why I love so dear
 This little spot of earth ?
 You ask me why I would not leave
 The land that gave me birth ?
 My father lies beneath its sod,
 My mother's dust lies here ;
 And many kindred ties there are,
 And friends I love so dear.

Then let those roam who wish to roam,
And have no ties to bind
Them to the land that gave them birth,
Whose brethren are mankind ;
Yet I—although my breast be warm
To all the human race—
Will stay at home, and in my heart
Give friends the dearest place.



M A R Y.

F all the names that ever rung
In prose or verse by poet sung,
There's none that's oftener on the tongue
Than Mary.

No other maid is half so fair,
Nor can at all with her compare ;
Hundreds have pined in deep despair
For Mary.

Well she can play the woman's part—
Her eyes go through you like a dart ;
She's broken many a tender heart—
Fair Mary.

All other names fade into night,
Before the poet's wondering sight ;
There's none can move him with such might
As Mary.

Her praise was sung by Henry Bell ;
For her poor Rabbie's heart did swell,
He does in sweetest accents tell
Of Mary.

“O ! Mary, dear,” of old was sung,
By one who's mortal coil was flung ;
The sailor's ghost, with hollow tongue,
Cried Mary.

For her my heart did never swell,
You may believe me when I tell—
I would not give my own dear Nell
For Mary.



THE RENT DAY.



Y wife and I do sometimes differ ;
 It matters not which is the stiffer
 To yield a point when in the wrong,
 Since now we're singing the same song.

It is well known the times are hard,
 But this the factor won't regard ;
 So both our minds on this are bent—
 How now we are to raise the rent.

For soon the dreaded day will come,
 When we must tally up the sum ;
 Aye, even to the hin'most cent—
 There's no abatement on the rent.

If we the dollars cannot pay
 Upon the fifteenth day of May,
 Our household goods are quickly sent
 To auction, all to pay the rent.

Yes, bed and bedding—all must go ;
 Our table, chairs, and cradle too ;
 He'll take the grate out of the vent
 Before he'll go without his rent.

My better half, as oft before,
 Says we've been aye provided for ;
 Has Providence not always sent
 The wherewithal to pay the rent ?

L U C K.

SOME folk are wealthy when they're born,
And some have riches to them borne;
Yet, tho' I have my fingers torn,
There's no such luck for me.

Some folk are born to silken shoes,
And have whatever they may choose ;
Yet, tho' I ne'er a gift refuse,
There's no such luck for me.

Tho' I may look o'er all the land,
And wish to have at my command
A foot or two whereon to stand,
There's no such luck for me.

I want not wealth, I want not power,
But just a cozy, sunny bower,
In which to spend life's evening hour—
That would be luck for me.

It's toil and moil from morn to night,
With all my energy and might,
And nothing better yet in sight—
That's all the luck for me.



L I F E.



HIS life is but a shadow
That's for a moment shown—
Like grass which waves in meadow,
That grows but to be mown.
What, tho' in spring the tender shoots
May cheer and please the eye ;
The worm of death is at the roots—
The plant will droop and die.

This life's a shoreless ocean,
No haven where to rest ;
The soul, in wild commotion,
Beats hard within the breast ;
What, tho' the summer breezes
May gently fan us now,
The winter's frost soon freezes
The sweat upon the brow.



HONOUR TO WHOM HONOUR IS DUE.

SOME men are praised for daring deeds,
And lauded, though a nation bleeds
At every pore for thousands slain,
So they a paltry end may gain.

The statesman, be he prince or lord,
Who for the pen prefers the sword,
Despising mild and gentle ways,
May win the thoughtless rabble's praise.

Alas ! that poets too should sing,
And to the feet should incense bring
Of him, who at a tyrant's nod,
Would make a scorpion of a rod.

Be mine—though in a lowly strain,
That scarce expects an ear to gain—
To laud the men of noble worth,
Though of obscure and humble birth.

Napier among the “mighty dead,”
Deserves a trophy o'er his head,
To mark the spot where now in sleep
He lies who bridged the sounding deep.

Not to the dead alone, 'tis true,
Are laurels of a nation due ;
Not Beaconsfield, but Thomas Seath,
Deserves to wear a golden wreath.

SEPTEMBER.



THE Autumn tinge is on the field,
 The groves assume a darker hue ;
 The teeming earth full soon will yield,
 The bounties which to faith are due.

No more is heard the voice of Spring,
 The Summer's joys are past and fled ;
 The trees aside their garments fling—
 Decay in Nature's book is read.

The birds have ceased their joyous song,
 No more they wake the echoes loud ;
 No more the lark on pinions strong,
 Soars to the skies and cleaves the cloud.

Yet Autumn in her varied hues,
 Does beauty to the eye unfold ;
 And pleasure brings to him who views
 Her auburn locks and sheaves of gold.

The husbandman at length beholds
 A rich reward for all his toil ;
 The Earth to him her lap unfolds,
 And yields the treasures of her soil.

Although in tears the seed was spread,
 Hope sprung with the appearing leaves ;
 By faith he saw the promised bread—
 In joy he now brings home his sheaves.

SABBATH MORN.



ER Cathkin hills the sun in beauty shines,
While through the vale the Sabbath morning
chimes

Sound sweet to hail the day of rest,
And calm the agitated breast.

Man wakes to life from sweet refreshing sleep,
To praise with joy, or o'er transgression weep.

He that can gaze with steady eye on high,
And see no cloud between him and the sky ;
To him the solemn bells seem sweet ;
And soon he goes with willing feet

To meet with those who love to praise their God,
And seek for guidance in the heavenly road.

While he that from debauchery awakes—
On him their sound no sweet impression makes—
The joyful bells awake to fear—
Their notes grate hard upon his ear ;
God's people in His house he would not meet,
And so he joins his comrades in the street.

And some indifferently prepare to spend
This precious day, which heaven for good did send
To all the toil-worn sons of man,
In which to do the good they can ;
Some spend at home in idleness the day,
Others through wood or meadow careless stray.

W I N T E R.

STERN Winter has come from his home in the North,

All drap'd in his garments of hoar frost and snow :

In his cold, icy car, he mounts and goes forth,
And to Nature he proves a relentless, dire foe.

The breath from his nostrils is death to the frail

Weak children of Nature, the flowers and the grass;
The leaves of the forest are strew'd by the gale

And rais'd by the speed of his wheels as they pass.

The blast from his mouth turns the earth into rock,

He binds up the brooklets, the rivers, and lakes;
The tread of his wheels gives the mountains a shock,

They roll through the valley—it trembles and quakes.

Loud Boreas, his henchman, his horn in his hand,

With lungs as of steel his chief's advent proclaims;
In grief old Dame Nature weeps o'er all the land,

The tears for her offspring rude Winter disdains.

He foams forth his wrath, and the tears that are shed,

Into hailstones are turn'd by the force of his breath;
The hills and the dales with his snow-flakes are clad,

The earth by his snow-drift is shrouded in death.

In his mantle of mist he wraps up his form;

He hateth the light, for his deeds are full vile;
In his chariot he rides on the wings of the storm,

He rides as a conqu'ror and bears off the spoil.

GLADSTONE IN MID-LOTHIAN.

HAT mighty daring spirit's this that moves
The Nation's heart out of its usual grooves,
That fills the air with war-notes of alarm,
To foes a dread, to friends a soothing charm ?

The border clans are set in bold array ;
This leader holds o'er men a mighty sway :
His words, surcharg'd with true celestial fire,
Bring down his foes, and lay them in the mire.

No huntsman he for power, or fame, or place—
He sees our nation bow'd beneath disgrace ;
No champion he of Turkey's daring wrong,
He'd free her subjects from the galling thong.

Brave Gladstone sees the land he dearly loves
Leagued with the vile, he therefore freely gives
The large experience of a well-spent life,
To aid and and guide us in the coming strife.

His trumpet gives no vague, uncertain sound,
The foe—though faggot fortified—are found
Trembling with fear, they dread the coming fight—
May He who ruleth all befriend the right.

TO THE NEW YEAR.



ARK, hark, the joyful bells are ringing
 Their merry notes sound loud and clear ;
 While cheerful voices now are singing
 A welcome to the new-born year.

We hail thy birth with joy and gladness,
 And greet thee with a heart sincere ;
 We banish for the hour all sadness,
 And welcome in the new-born year.

To-morrow's sun may rise in sorrow,
 And bring its load of grief or fear ;
 We think not now upon to-morrow,
 But hail with mirth the new-born year.

Around thy cradle we are singing
 A joyous song our hearts to cheer ;
 While gleeful bells aloft are ringing
 A welcome to the new-born year.



THE ILLS OF LIFE.

HTHE ills of life oft times are sown
By heedless youth—by manhood grown ;
And in old age no power can stop
The yield of an abundant crop.

He that will not good counsel mind,
Must for his folly reap the wind,—
Nay, more, if wind should be the seed,
The whirlwind's sure to be the bread.

He that in folly finds delights,
And in debauch'ry spends his nights,
Sows for old age remorse and pain,
With other evils in their train.

That cause will thus produce effect,
We need no wisdom to detect ;
For every day and every hour
We see the thorn without the flower.

Yet though 'tis true that ills will grow,
Producing misery and woe,
From evil seed in fleshly soil,
Why do the righteous share the broil ?

Why just to show of faith the test—
That in God's goodness sure they rest ;
And though they cannot see the end
He has in view, their wills they bend.

Of this an instance, righteous Job,
Whom Satan was allowed to rob
Of all his earthly hope and joy,
That trust in God he might destroy.

Then yield not thou to vile transgression,
But keep in mind this useful lesson,
That when God strikes, he strikes in love—
To fix our hearts on things above.

When ills o'er take you by the way,
That seem to set your faith at bay ;
Be sure of this, God will befriend
Him that is faithful to the end.

Then cast aside your doubt and fear,
Be strong in faith, for God is near ;
He will not spurn your feeble dust,
Nor put to shame your humble trust.



TO AN AULD COAT.

Y faithful friend we two must part,
Altho' it grieves me to the heart ;
You're getting old and bare, and seedy,
And I must not look poor or needy.

For if a man seems to be poor,
The world will look on him quite sour ;
And pass him by with scarce a nod,
Or shun him on the Queen's high-road.

But if he wears a grand new coat—
No matter whether paid or not—
He stands high in the world's esteem—
Its gloss will all his faults redeem.

You've serv'd me well, my worthy friend,
And 'mong the rags I'm loath to send
Your tatter'd remnants now, since they
Won't keep the wintry wind away.

To what base uses you may be
Here yet applied is hid from me ;
Maybe your ashes will produce
Material for a nobler use.

Who knows but this, your tatter'd lining,
May yet with brightest gems be shining,
When turned into a creamy sheet
Where poet may his thoughts repeat.

Yes, words of sweet poetic fire
May handed be to son from sire—
To generations yet unborn—
On these poor fragments tash'd and torn.

This thought will help to soothe regret,
And reconcile me to your fate;
I'll grieve no more o'er shatter'd casket,
So vanish to the old rag basket!



THE TAY BRIDGE DISASTER, DEC. 28, 1879.
INTO THE JAWS OF DEATH.

BLACK dismal clouds were hurl'd across the sky,
The moon in fitful gleams look'd on the
scene;
The wind, lash'd into thousand furies high,
Howl'd through the air like an incarnate fiend,
The fated train, that nought on earth could
stay,
In reckless speed rush'd to the Bridge of Tay.

The wind for one brief moment held its peace,
Aghast it stood to view its handiwork;
On flew the unsuspecting mass apace,
Unconscious of the danger that did lurk
Upon its path—Ye furies hold your breath,
See mortals hurled into the jaws of death !

What mind can comprehend—what tongue can tell
The scene, as to the wat'ry depths below
The train is dash'd, as into yawning hell ?
Without one sympathising wail of woe,
The angry waves engulf both quick and dead—
And surge in eddying fury o'er their head.

I WANT BUT FRIENDS.



WANT but friends—I want not foes—
 The world is drear without them ;
 I much prefer kind words to blows—
 There's something nice about them.

This world would be full dark indeed,
 Did friendship's ray not light it ;
 I know not what may be the creed
 Of him who tries to slight it.

A sterling friend is what I want,
 With kindly words to cheer me ;
 For in this life my joys are scant,
 And many cares do fear me.

A cheerful word—a blythesome nod—
 It costs not much to spare it ;
 Should either ease us of a load,
 Or give us strength to bear it.

When gathering clouds hang overhead,
 And seem inclined to crush us,
 Then "friends in need are friends indeed"
 In something more than wishes.



THE VOICE OF NATURE.

MARK ! is that the voice of Nature,
Borne upon the passing breeze ?
Yes, I hear her gentle whispers
Overhead, among the trees.

What is that she's slowly saying ?
Note her accents soft and mild,
Gently speaking to her offspring
Like a mother to her child :—

Wake from slumber, day is breaking ;
See the sun has reared his crest ;
Lag not now, for duty calls you—
Rise up from your winter's rest !

Be not like the sluggard, folding
Idle hands upon your breast ;
But of life, and joy, and beauty,
Spread a universal feast !

Burst the fetters that have bound you
Through the dreary winter's night ;
Let the sap ascend the branches
And assert its living might !

Bud and blossom into beauty,
Spread your leaves, for summer's nigh ;
Be to wearied man a shelter
From the blazing sun on high !

Earth revive, send forth your verdure,
Now let grass and flowers appear !
Vocal make the groves, ye songsters,
With your warblings loud and clear !

Murmur on, thou little streamlet,
Let thy voice join with the throng !
Glen to glen send back the echoes
Of the merry milkmaid's song.



A P R I L.

SWEET April, with her smiles and tears,
An emblem is of youthful years ;
Her sunbeams dance o'er hill and plain,
Her show'rs refresh them with soft rain.

The noisy, restless little brook
Plays hide and seek in every nook ;
Like little children at their play
The bubbles dance and skip all day.

The flowers, the grass, the budding trees
Are waving gently in the breeze ;
The lark is caroling on high ;
The thrush doth from the copse reply.

All nature welcomes thee with joy,
And pets thee like a wayward boy ;
Thy merry pranks and winning ways
Make all things join to sound thy praise.



TO A VIOLET.

 THOU modest little blossom,
 Why strive to hide thy face ?
 Wouldst thou not grace a station
 In a much higher place ?
 Beneath the hedgerow cow'ring,
 Scarce seen the grass among,
 Though seldom woo'd or flatter'd,
 Thou bloomest all day long.

Though humble be thy station
 Among the floral race,
 Yet still thy very meekness
 Adds lustre to thy grace.
 Teach me, sweet child of nature,
 This lesson from above,
 That creatures, howe'er humble,
 May share their Maker's love.



THE PRIMROSE.

PRIMROSE, bright token of the early spring,
Fain would I in thy praises sweetly sing,
If I could cull from Nature or from Art
A tribute, prompted by a willing heart.

To thee, dear Muse, I turn and urge my claim ;
Inspire my pen with words to grace my theme !
To chant thy praise, thou gem with golden crown,
And tell thy worth 'mong flowers of more renown.

Ere cold, bleak Winter to his home repairs,
And while as yet scarce other flower appears
Save the pure snowdrop, foremost of the train,
With drooping head that smiles on every plain.

Within the frozen ground thy deep-set roots,
Have gather'd strength to send up tender shoots,
Which, pale at first, 'neath Sol's inspiring power,
Show brighter green with every passing hour.

Drinking the solar rays, refresh'd with dew,
Full soon appear thy flow'rs of yellow hue ;
On slender stalks they bend to ev'ry breeze
That plays at hide and seek among the trees.

And children to thy lowly haunts repair,
And laughing twine thy blossoms in their hair ;
Or loving homeward bear thee as a prize,
To adorn some spot that's sacred in their eyes.

O that my life may show as true an end,
And that my will may to my Maker's bend,
Then tho' my skin and flesh decay and wither,
I yet may hear Him say, “Friend, come up hither.”



M A Y.

MAY, with her flowers, has come now to cheer
us,

Nought in her looks to worry or fear us ;
Bright, winning smiles on her cheek and her brow,
Love in her eyes, on her lips a sweet vow.

Wedded to nature, the field and the grove
Join in the union and sound forth their love ;
Loud sounding praises sweet voices employ,
Filling the air with their wild notes of joy.

Loaded with incense, the south breezes blow
Over the hillsides—through valleys they go ;
Perfuming the air by night and by day,
Since Nature was wedded to gay, lovely May.

Fruits of their union you plainly may see
Dotting the hillside, the plain, and the lea ;
Grass in the meadow and flowers in the field—
Proving to all that their nuptials are sealed.



J U N E.

MATRON-LIKE now June appears—
Emblem of maturer years ;
Leafy bowers and waving corn—
Lengthen'd sunshine night and morn—
Proud to see her children stand
In their prime on every hand.
Blossom into fruit is turn'd
By the fiery love which burn'd
All the dross and chaff away
Of thy frailer sister May.
Greet we thee with hearts sincere,
Sound thy praises far and near ;
All thy bounties we will prize
As sweet blessings from the skies.



FRIENDLY WOUNDS.

HOUR words have been unkind, friends,
Your words have been unkind;
They taste of winter's frost, friends,
They're cutting as its wind.

You've trod upon my toes, friends,
You've trod upon my toes;
Yet, though you press me hard friends,
I will not call you foes.

You've made my back to smart, friends,
You've made my back to smart;
Yet, though the wounds are deep, friends,
They have not reach'd my heart.

This thought will cheer me up, friends,
This thought will cheer me up;
The child's been often spoil'd, friends,
By sparing of the whip.



THE DEAR OLD LAND.



LET poets sing of other lands—
 Of lands across the sea—
 No other land beneath the sun,
 Is half so dear to me,
 As that where the rugged mountains tow'r,
 The land of wood and glen ;
 The land of lovely maidens fair,
 The land of honest men.

The land, the land, the dear old land,
 For which brave Wallace bled ;
 The land where Bruce his warriors true,
 To death or victory led.
 This land is dear to me beyond
 All other lands on earth ;
 For 'tis my home, my native home,
 The land that gave me birth.



L'ENVOL.

IND friend ! should you have read thus far,
I hope you've met with nought to mar
Such pleasure as I meant to give,
In grouping here these thoughts of mine
In form in which perchance they'll live,
Although, perhaps, they may not shine.
On such a theme I shall not further dwell—
But with best wishes kindly say—Farewell !



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